

M&A Advisors of the Year - Austria

WEBER & CO. Attorneys-at-law

WEBER & CO. is a leading Austrian law firm, with a simple maxim: consistent leadership in quality. Christoph Moser, Partner, tells us more about the firm and its continuing success in the corporate field.

WEBER & CO. is "very proud" of the firm's success in the 2014 Legal Awards, says Christoph Moser, Partner. *"The award, M&A Advisors of the Year - Austria, perfectly reflects our law firm's ambitions in the past year, where we tried to strengthen our M&A business in addition to our strong corporate finance practice. It is an honour for us to see that our activities have been recognised in the legal market. Further, the title also reflects the clients' trust in our legal services for M&A transactions."*

WEBER & CO. is a renowned Austrian law firm. Its core practice areas are corporate finance, banking, dispute resolution (litigation and arbitration), corporate/M&A and real estate.

"Our business very much focuses on our core practice areas corporate finance, banking, dispute resolution (litigation and arbitration), corporate/M&A as well as real estate," says Moser. *"Clients of the firm appreciate the dedication and know-how of our partners in our core areas of practice. In particular in capital markets/corporate finance, we see ourselves as a Tier I firm in Austria, which is involved on most of the relevant high profile deals in this market sector. Further, our M&A business has significantly improved over the last couple of years and is now an additional important driver for the success of our firm."*

"We regularly advise banks and issuers on capital market issues (equity and debt), structured finances, mergers and acquisitions as well as parties in legal proceedings," he continues. *"Over the past years and in light of the economic situation in Europe, legal specialisation has become an even more important asset. Clients seek for lawyers with in-depth knowledge in the respective areas and require immediate attention and advice. As a law firm with a strong focus on our core practice areas and with partners being renowned experts in their fields of specialisation, we are able to provide our clients highest standards of legal services and proficiency with immediate response times."*



Statue at Hofburg background with town hall of Vienna Austria

Moser believes the most significant developments in the Austrian legal market over the past 12 months have been a renaissance of large equity capital market transactions, in particular rights issues. *"Furthermore, we have seen a number of debt capital market transactions in 2012 and 2013, the pace of which has slowed down a little bit in 2014. In connection with corporate finance, developments in the European legal framework have particularly driven our legal advice on fund marketing in Austria, as the Alternative Investment Fund Managers Directive was implemented in Austria. The implementation has forced several market participants to apply for registrations or licenses in Austria. Challenges for our business primarily relate to our maxim of consistent leadership in quality and know-how. Even in light of numerous new European law acts and their implementations in Austria, we constantly aim to be aware of new frameworks relevant for our core clients and to inform them about new developments affecting their industry or business."*

In the past 12-24 months, Austrian M&A business has seen high volume transactions, including in particular the acquisition of a controlling stake in Telekom Austria by America Movil, Moser says. *"Recently, public M&A of stock exchange listed companies has also been a major trend in the Austrian market, after a quiet time. Noticeable decreases in stock quotes of Austrian listed companies have supported this recent trend. Accordingly, if buyers continue pursuing their targets at such pace, we believe to see several further takeover transactions in Austria in 2015."*

"Furthermore, mergers and acquisitions in the banking sector have been and are expected to continue to play a leading role in the Austrian M&A market in the upcoming twelve months. In addition, we expect that non-public mid-size M&A transactions in certain industries will continue to be a factor, especially driven by strategic investors searching for valuable targets."

Asked whether working in Austria presents any specific challenges or opportunities that may not necessarily apply to firms in other parts of the world, Moser says Austrian legal trends very much depend on European legal frameworks. *"Accordingly, developments on a European level have an enormous impact on Austrian law and trends. Austria itself still is seen as a hub to the CEE region, especially for companies from Western Europe or the US. We work closely with several large international law firms that advise clients with a focus on Austria as such CEE hub,"* he explains.

The most rewarding aspect of working in the legal profession, in Moser's opinion, is positive client feedback. *"As a lawyer, you will easily get negative feedback from clients if things are not going well. To earn positive feedback from clients, especially if it is provided not only to us but also communicated in the market and towards legal guides, is a great motivation for all of our team members to continue providing valuable legal services."*

Fact File

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RECHTSANWÄLTE

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